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DOCUMENT NO.
NO CHANGE IN CLASS. []
[] DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S © 201
NEXT REVIEW DATE:
AUTH: HR 70-2
DATE: 11/11/91 REVIEWER: []

6 June 1952

25X1

Dear Frank:

Thanks very much for your note of June 3rd, with copy of the Defense Department's reply to the State Department opus on Political Advisors. I must say that these two documents are a little bit amusing, in that they so accurately reflect the traditional attitude of the two Departments, each "viewing with alarm" and each either seeking a toe hold on the other's terrain or endeavoring rigidly to exclude a penetration.

Actually, I think a reasonable answer lies somewhere between the two positions. A really good (repeat really good) Political Advisor with loyalty and allegiance properly directed would be an enormous help to any Military Commander confronted with political problems. I cannot help but think that if a man like George Kennan, for instance, had been sitting inconspicuously behind the principal negotiators at Panmunjom our playmates there would not have scored their political and psychological successes which have been the only products so far of these negotiations. On the other hand, a less independent mind who was functioning on a checkrein from Foggy Bottom, and who was communicating privately and directly with the State Department and its Policy Planning Staff, might be a thorough nuisance or even a serious embarrassment.

It seems to me that the printed doctrine might very well define in a general way the status and functions of a Political Advisor, but they should at the same time emphasize in unmistakable terms the considerations brought out in paragraphs f., h., and i., particularly, of Pat Carter's letter.

Faithfully,

12/ Redell

OSD REVIEW COMPLETED

Mr. Frank C. Nash/
Office of the Secretary of Defense
Washington 25, D. C.

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WBSmith/dr
Distribution:

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Orig & 1 - Addressee

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sci/osa

See State file also re this matter.

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Approved For Release 2004/07/08 : CIA-RDP80R01731R001300200011-8
MEMORANDUM FOR: GENERAL SMITH

Pat Carter would not tell me who prepared his letter to Chip Bohlen (enclosure to the attached letter from Frank Nash); however, he "modestly" said he did make a few corrections to it and asked me to request your reaction. I would also be interested since while at the War College we argued this problem in every committee throughout the year with the consensus finally being about as Pat has stated.

My reaction is that both departments would be in taking these positions & that the correct answer is a last day way between.

5 June 1952

(DATE)

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Ref ER 2-7125,
2-6196

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

Revised by
3-9776

Noted by DCI
6 June 52 WR

Dear Bedell:

With reference to our exchange of notes on 7 March and 20 March, 1952, concerning the State Department study on Political Advisors in a Military Theatre of Operations, inclosed herewith for your information is a copy of our reply to Chip Bohlen.

The reaction of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was about as expected, and I might add, very much in line with your own thoughts on the subject.

I noted that Chip Bohlen quickly adopted many of the comments you sent to him, by making a number of substantive changes in the basic paper while it was still under study in the Defense Department.

I am sure that your comments to State must have prepared the way so that they should not have been too surprised or shocked when receiving the attached letter.

Sincerely yours,

Frank Nash

P.S. Chip just telephoned me to register a "bleat" about the letter, - sort of "more in sorrow than in anger." more anon.

General Walter B. Smith

Director, Central Intelligence Agency

FW.

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May 14, 1952

Dear Chip:

In Frank Nash's absence, I am replying to your letter dated 5 February 1952, which forwarded a copy of a "Planning Study on the Function and Status of the Political Advisor in a [redacted] 25X1
[redacted], as a suggested basis for staff discussions between the Department of State and the Department of Defense, with a view to developing an agreed paper for joint submission to the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense. Reference is also made to letters, dated 8 February 1952 and 12 February 1952, from [redacted] 25X1
[redacted] to Frank and letters dated 18 April and 18 April 1952, from you to Frank which forwarded additional information concerning the basic study.

On 12 March 1952, Frank wrote to you to the effect that we were making a departmental study of the problem. This study has now been completed, and our views are as follows:

The position of political advisor was introduced into certain American military commands during World War II as a result of British suggestion. No two theatres or areas in which political advisors were assigned to military commands were alike politically, racially, or economically. Further, those theatres or areas differed as to types of military operations conducted, local military command relationships between United States and Allied forces, and relationships between United States forces and indigenous forces and populations. Conditions in each theatre or area varied so widely that the terms of reference of certain United States military commanders in the different localities bore little resemblance one to another. Such terms of reference are not matters properly suitable for inclusion in military "doctrine." The terms of reference of or letters of instructions to such commanders were not formulated until immediately prior to the establishment of the command and were altered from time to time to meet changing circumstances. Similarly, the functions of the political advisor varied depending upon the theatre and the command to which he may have been assigned, and in some instances they varied within one command depending upon the progress of the military campaign.

Political advisors in World War II were of value according to the extent to which political factors in any theatre of operations complicated military operations.

The following general considerations should apply to the appointment of political advisors, if any, to military commanders in the field during hostilities:

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a. Existing arrangements as to the status and functions of political personnel in relation to present specific United States commands abroad should continue in effect until and unless changed circumstances dictate a need for change in such arrangements;

b. A Theatre, Area, or Unified Commander under the Joint Chiefs of Staff in command of military operations receives orders and directives only from the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Within the limits of his command he is the single and supreme United States authority in all matters relating to his operations, whether they be military, logistical, political, or economic in nature. Similarly, a subordinate military commander has complete responsibility and authority within the limits of his command, subject only to the authority of his superior military commander;

c. It may be necessary or desirable to assign political advisers to certain military commanders in the field whose responsibilities include some which are politico-military in nature, but such an assignment should not be mandatory. The governing factors should be the degree to which political advice is necessary to the commander for the accomplishment of his mission and the need for him to receive such advice first-hand on a continuing basis from an official accompanying him. In this connection, the size of the command is not a criterion of the need for a political adviser. Thus, the Commander in Chief, Pacific does not have nor does he need a political adviser; the Commanding General, United States Forces in Austria, a much smaller command, needed and had one;

d. The need for the assignment of a political adviser to any particular military commander in the field should be determined by the Department of Defense, which in turn would welcome suggestions or advice from the Department of State in the premises. In this connection, the Department of Defense would oppose the assignment of political advisers to any military commanders in the Zone of the Interior, other than to those who may have direct military operating responsibilities extending into the territory of foreign nations, and to them only in exceptional cases;

e. The function of a political adviser who may be assigned to a military commander is, in essence, to provide political and economic advice, and personal assistance, on a continuing basis, to that commander as necessary to the accomplishment of his task and as appropriate to his needs. It is to be expected that he would be of particular assistance to the military commander in the latter's task of attaining such political and economic objectives as may be included within his directives;

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f. A political adviser to a military commander in the field should serve as a member of the staff of that commander with individual loyalty and responsibility to that commander. While it is to be expected that each military commander-political adviser relationship will rest upon a different personal basis, it is axiomatic that the political adviser must be personally acceptable to the military commander. In this connection, no written definition of function or status will ensure the success of the organization if mutual confidence and trust are lacking;

g. A political adviser should be furnished civilian assistants as necessary for him to perform his functions;

h. The political adviser should use military channels of communication in a manner practically analogous to that of other members of the staff of the military commander. It would also be expected that the Department of State would, from time to time, communicate with the political advisers. Such communications also should be through military channels and should be regarded as information, and not as directives;

i. Inasmuch as it is the recognized duty and right of a military commander to organize his own staff best to meet his command requirements, the organizational details relative to such civilian assistants as may accompany the political adviser are a matter within the purview of that commander. The functions to be performed by members of the staff are normally laid down when the staff is formed, and those functions, organization-wise, are reflected in the table of organization when it is drawn up for the staff as a whole. It would be expected that the same standards would apply in the table of organization, to both military and civilian members of the staff. The numerous details of quarters, perquisites, precedence, and what is loosely termed "assimilated rank," etc., would be prescribed at the time of the organizing of the staff, upon the basis of the functions and responsibilities to be performed as reflected in the table of organization of the staff. The guiding considerations in such details in their applicability to civilians on a staff should be those of responsibility and function on the staff; and

j. The terms of reference, including functions and status of a political adviser to a military commander in the field should be formulated immediately prior to his assignment and should be based upon the special problems facing the command. Such terms of reference should, in general, be mutually satisfactory to the military commander and to the political adviser.

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In the light of all of the foregoing, we conclude that no "doctrine" of general application which would be either generally appropriate or suitable can be established in advance of hostilities to control the functions and status of a political adviser to a military commander in time of war. Further, such a "doctrine" is neither practicable nor necessary. Accordingly, we consider that a directive within the Departments of State and Defense which would attempt to establish such a "doctrine" should not be issued.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Marshall S. Carter
Director, Executive Office of the Secretary

Mr. Charles E. Bohlen
The Counselor
Department of State

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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON

20 March 1952

2-7125
Ref ER
2-6622

Dear Bedell:

Thank you for your letter of 7 March 1952
and the copy of your comments to the State
Department on the subject of "Political
Advisers in a Military Theatre of Operations."
I enjoyed the comments very much and expect to
plagiarize them in large measure in responding
to State. First, however, we have asked for the
views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. We are
expecting an interesting reaction from them.

Many thanks and best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

*Frank
Mack*

Lt. Gen. Walter B. Smith
Director, Central Intelligence

Agency

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Date 14/4/81 Reviewer



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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

Executive Review

2-7125

20 March 1952

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and the copy of your comments to the State
Department on the subject of "Political
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I enjoyed the comments very much and expect to
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Many thanks and best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

Lt. Gen. Walter B. Smith
Director, Central Intelligence
Agency

SIGNED

Frank

W. B. Smith

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Authority: HR 70-2
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Date 14/4/81 Reviewer

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3/7/52

Dear Frank:

This is the paper I mentioned on the phone. My pencilled comments are pretty crude. However, they, and my letter to Chip, may suggest some changes.

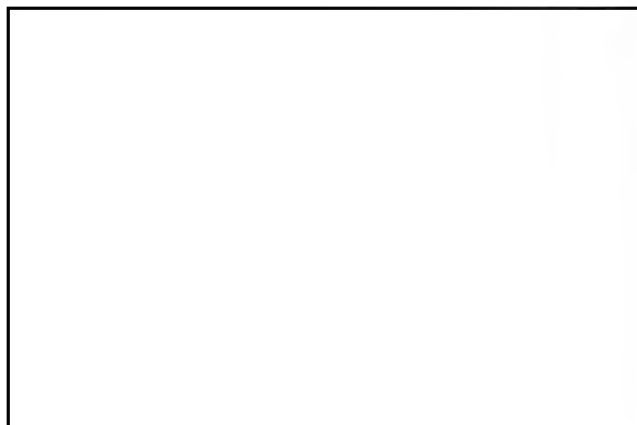
Naturally, my suggestions were not all acceptable to the State Dept.

/s/ Bedell

Mr. Frank C. Nash, OSD

w/ basic paper from ER 2-6622

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XR: 2-6196

Document No. _____
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Authority: HR 70-2

☐ It contains nothing of CIA interest.

Date 19/4/91 Reviewer _____

March 4, 1952

25X1

Dear Bedell:

My sincere thanks for your letter of February 22. Your comments on the Political Adviser paper are of the greatest value and help, and will be utilized to the full in the further development of this paper.

I agree that it is unnecessary, and perhaps undesirable, to make any reference to "assimilated rank" in the case of the Political Adviser himself. However, in the case of subordinate members of the Political Adviser's staff, particularly in the middle and junior Foreign Service grades, I am not so sure, as it is at the lower civilian and military staff levels that the headaches begin to multiply in regard to such practical things as office space, billets, messing, transportation, PX privileges, etc., and it is here that the device of "assimilated rank", anomalous though it may be, appears to afford a convenient rule of thumb for clarifying matters within the military scheme of things.

The language to which you take exception in subparagraphs 4 and 5 of the paper is probably too broad and in need of clarification. Obviously, the Political Adviser is not going to try to double as a tactical expert. Nevertheless, the field of potential political interest can be very broad: For example, the selection of certain major strategic objectives, especially air targets, may carry important political implications, alongside the predominantly military considerations. On such matters the Political Adviser should have a recognized voice, and I think it would be a mistake to try to delimit his field of potential interest in terms

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General Walter B. Smith,
Director,
Central Intelligence Agency.

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which might hamper his freedom in proffering advice where it seems appropriate.

(Parenthetically, the reference in subparagraph 5 to not undertaking operational responsibilities is intended primarily as guidance to the Political Adviser's staff assistants, particularly those who may be working on Civil Affairs or Psychological Warfare problems, where the boundary between the advisory function and the operating function can at times be fuzzy).

Subparagraph 6 is perhaps the crux of the paper, and involves problems of relationship, as between Theater Commander and Political Adviser, including the intangibles of the personal equation, which probably can only be approximated in a written paper. I think that the Political Adviser must have freedom to consult the Department directly if he is to function effectively. At the same time he is acting in a confidential relationship to the Theater Commander, which means that he can have no secrets from the Theater Commander and Chief of Staff, and that he must keep them fully informed of all his exchanges with the Department. From that point on, definition of the relationship becomes difficult to the degree where about the best that can be said is that it is something that the Theater Commander and the Political Adviser will have to work out between themselves in each individual command. Whether or not the Political Adviser should have a separate cryptographic system seems to me to be something for the Theater Commander to decide. The important consideration is to have an adequate means of assuring privacy of communications between the Political Adviser and the Department as regards lower echelons of the Theater staff and the Pentagon, and of thus protecting the security of political messages to and from the Theater.

Your comment on subparagraph 9 regarding "the need to know" in respect of secret operations suggests that a qualifying clause might be appropriate here.

I appreciate

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I appreciate very much the time and thought which you have given to this paper, and hope you will let me have any other comments that occur to you, now or later.

Sincerely yours,

P.S. Mr. Carter has transcribed your pencilled notes to another copy of the paper, and suggests that you might like to have your annotated copy back for your files, so I am returning it.

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